

VZCZCXRO2471
OO RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHPB
DE RUEHPF #0583 0861026
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 271026Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6355
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM IMMEDIATE
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 000583

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS, OES/IHA DANIEL SINGER AND NATALIA
COMELLA, AND CA/OCS/ACS ELIZABETH RYAN
HHS FOR ASST SEC STEWART SIMONSON
GENEVA FOR RMA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [KFLU](#) [SENV](#) [AMED](#) [CB](#)

SUBJECT: CAMBODIA/AI: THREE MORE HOSPITALIZED WITH AI-LIKE
SYMPTOMS

REF: PHNOM PENH 570

¶1. One adult and two children with fevers and respiratory problems were admitted to Calmette Hospital in Phnom Penh on Saturday. The three have been tested for avian influenza and results are expected by tomorrow. The three patients come from a neighboring village in the same district as the three-year-old girl who died of avian influenza on March 21 (reftel). The district--Kong Pisei district in Kampong Speu province--is about 30 miles from Phnom Penh. According to press reports, the three individuals had handled dead chickens before falling ill. Jean-Louis Sarthou, director of the Pasteur Institute, told DCM today that the Ministry of Health/WHO/Pasteur Institute investigation team was quite concerned about the new cases.

¶2. Press reports indicate that an additional five people who had contact with the three hospitalized individuals are also being tested for avian influenza. According to Dr. Sirenda Vong of the Pasteur Institute, seven individuals with mild symptoms who were being monitored on Friday have all tested negative for avian influenza and their symptoms have disappeared.

¶3. Investigation team officials report being deluged with press calls about the reported death. Due to concerns about the safety of the affected individuals and their families, the potential for misleading rumors, and the time and energy involved in responding to constant inquiries, they are maintaining a fairly tight-lipped approach. Team officials are particularly concerned that the name of the three-year-old who died has been leaked--or possibly sold--to the press and has appeared in some news accounts.

¶4. Post's CDC office will remain in close contact with the investigation team and is prepared to provide technical assistance, if requested.
Mussomeli